MOUNT DERBY ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

March 2003

Approved by:

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Date: March 25/03

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Date: Mar. 31/03

MOUNT DERBY ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Mount Derby Ecological Reserve is to protect an altitudinal cross section of vegetation from the mid-montane to the alpine zone. The ecological reserve comprises the very steep northwest to southwest-facing slopes of Mount Derby, which are dissected by numerous precipitous ravines. The ecological reserve protects seven major forest communities – at lower elevations they are: 1) amabilis fir - western hemlock - Alaskan blueberry with bunch berry and deer fern; 2) western hemlock – western red cedar – salal/blueberry/false azalea. At mid-elevations, the communities are 3) amabilis fir - mountain hemlock - yellow cedar - oval-leaved blueberry and 4) mountain hemlock – yellow cedar – copperbush/blueberries. Higher elevations have 5) very dense mountain hemlock krummholz, 6) mountain hemlock – blue-leaved huckleberry – mountain heather 'parkland' and 7) open alpine heath of pink and while mountain heathers. Discontinuous alpine herb communities are present where the substrate is favourable.

No faunal records are available, but black-tailed deer are presumed to be abundant and cougar and wolf may be present.

Together with Lower Tsitika River Park, Tsitika Mountain Ecological Reserve and Robson Bight (Michael Bigg) Ecological Reserve, much of the lower end of the Tsitika River has been protected.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Protection of natural values from adjacent logging	➢ Review forest development plans to ensure that forest harvesting activity does not impact the ecological reserve and its values. ➢ Encourage more formal monitoring and recruit Volunteer Warden.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Mount Derby Ecological Reserve contributes 1.1% to the representation of the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection (NIM), which is under represented in the protected areas system at 9.1%. The ecological reserve is one of 18 protected areas that contribute to the representation of NIM. When treated as a contiguous protected area in conjunction with Lower Tsitika River Park, Robson Bight ER, and Tsitika Mountain ER, its contribution to the representation of NIM increases to 10.1%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Minimal contribution (0.19%) to the representation of CWHvm2 which has only 8.7% of its area protected. It also makes minimal contributions to MHmm1, CWHvm1, and ATunp.
Special Features	☒	Unique plant communities (alpine tundra)
Rare/Endangered Values	☐	None known at this time
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☐	None known at this time

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☐	Not Applicable
travel corridor	☐	Not Applicable
local recreation	☐	Not Applicable
Special Opportunities	☐	Not Applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Offsite – plant communities

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values unknown
Special Feature	☐	Not Applicable

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of ecological reserves on Vancouver Island and in British Columbia

Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable
Partnerships	☐	Not Applicable
Vulnerability	☒	Vulnerable to adjacent logging and fire
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	This site was one of six identified in the Tsitika River drainage by the Tsitika Planning Team in 1970s.

Area: 557 hectares

Date of establishment: August 10, 1989